

What is a Ganglion Cyst?

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Ganglion cyst is caused from a herniation of a weakened joint capsule or tendon sheath that allows fluid to accumulate and become trapped. They can occur in or around joints or tendons in the hand, wrist and sometimes feet. Frequently they are asymptomatic. They do not cause any damage but take up space and can irritate the surrounding soft tissues or tendons. Most often, these cysts show up on the back of the wrist, but they can also appear on the palm side. They usually happen because of minor injuries, wear and tear, or changes in the tissues around the joints.

These cysts don't usually cause pain or problems, but sometimes they might look a little unusual or bothersome because of their size or appearance.



If you notice a lump on your child's wrist or hand, it's a good idea to have it checked by a healthcare provider to make sure it's a ganglion cyst and to talk about the best way to care for it.

How do you treat a Ganglion Cyst?

Treatment ranges from observation, immobilization, aspiration and surgical excision depending on the severity of symptoms. 4/5 ganglion cysts will completely resolve on their own

Observation, immobilization, activity modification, and anti-inflammatory medication are usually recommended with mild intermittent symptoms.

Aspiration is offered with moderate more persistent symptoms that have not resolved with conservative treatment. Aspiration has approximately 50% recurrence rate.

Surgery is indicated after failure of conservative treatment, worsening pain or cyst enlargement, and has about approximately 10% chance of recurrence.



Your child can usually keep doing their normal activities, including sports, as long as the cyst isn't causing pain or other symptoms. Activity limits are only needed if the cyst bothers them.

Tips for Parents:

- Keep an eye on the cyst to see if it grows, changes, or causes your child any pain.
- Encourage your child to avoid putting too much pressure or strain on the wrist or hand if the cyst bothers them.
- Don't try to pop or squeeze the cyst at home—it can cause infection or other problems.
- If your child feels pain, numbness, or difficulty moving their hand or wrist, contact your healthcare provider right away.
- Remember, most ganglion cysts are harmless and may go away on their own over time.



What you should know

What Should Families Know About Ganglion Cysts?

- They're not dangerous: Ganglion cysts aren't cancer and don't cause serious health problems for most kids.
- They can change size: Sometimes the lump might get bigger or smaller, especially with activity or rest.
- They don't always need treatment: Many ganglion cysts go away on their own without needing surgery or medicine.
- Pain isn't common, but can happen: If the cyst presses on nerves or nearby tissues, your child might feel some discomfort or tingling.
- A healthcare provider can help with diagnosis: To be sure it's a ganglion cyst, the healthcare provider may use a simple exam, or sometimes an ultrasound.
- Avoid home remedies: Don't try to pop, squeeze, or hit the cyst—this can cause more problems or infection.
- Surgery is safe and effective: If needed, removing the cyst is usually a quick and safe procedure, and most kids recover fully.
- Physical therapy can help after surgery: Sometimes gentle exercises help regain strength and movement.
- Emotional support matters: Seeing a lump can worry kids and parents, so talking openly with your healthcare provider can help ease concerns.

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